THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI JAY PRAKASH NARAYAN YADAV): (a) and (b) The National Water Policy lays emphasis on development and managment of ground water resources in sustainable manner. It provides for periodic reassessment of ground water potential on a scientific basis, taking into consideration the quality of water available and economic viability of its extraction.

Methane emission from dams

1618. SHRIMATI HEMA MALINI: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that Indian dams are the largest global warming contributors due to excessive emission of Methane compared to all other nations;

(b) if so, the reaction of Government thereto and whether any steps have been taken to minimize Methane emission from the dams;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI JAY PRAKASH NARAYAN YADAV): (a) to (d) Ministry of Environment and Forests has informed that there are news reports based on studies carried out in Brazil which *inter-alia* includes assessment of emission of Methane from reservoirs of India. The Ministry of Environment & Forests has also informed that this study is without any Indian experimental data and no scientific study, as on date, has been brought out pertaining to Methane emission from the reservoirs of Indian Dams. However, measures in respect of removal vegetation *i.e.* trees etc. from the reservoir area with a view to reduce the emission of Methane from reservoir constitute part of the planning process.

Water-seepage from dams

1619. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government takes precaution to see that the Central Water Commission gives advice to ensure that water-seepage from dams will not harm the weaker sections;

(b) whether it is a fact that the Central Water Commission has ignored such problems after construction of dams;

(c) what corrective steps will be taken to ensure that the poorer sections are not forced to suffer from faulty designs; and

(d) the steps proposed to ensure that the Central Water Commission acts fast to find solutions for such problems?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI JAY PRAKASH NARAYAN YADAV): (a) Dams are in general designed and executed by the State Government and Central Water Commission (CWC) is charged with the general responsibility of advising the State Government as and when required in their investigations and design.

(b) Since mainly State Governments are the owners of the dams, the responsibility of their safety and maintenance rests with them. The role of Central Government is confined to giving advisory services with regard to safety and rehabilitation of such dams.

The Dam Safety Organizations (DSO) of CWC has prepared a number of guidelines and dam safety related literature and circulated to the State Government and State DSOs to guide them in the safety inspections of existing dams and remedial actions. The DSO was called upon to assist in many projects in which distress was/has been noticed for identifying the causes and to suggest appropriate remedial measures.

(c) The Government of India, Ministry of Water Resources constituted the National Committee on Dam Safety (NCDS) to oversee dam safety activities in various States and suggest improvements to bring dam safety practices in the line with the latest state-of-art technologies, consistent with Indian conditions.

As per the "Dam Safety Procedure" laid down by the committee, all large dams are required to be inspected twice a year during pre-and post-monsoon periods. These inspections are being carried out by the "Dam Safety Organizations" of the respective States/owners of dams.

The States and dam owning organizations have also to review the safety aspects of all the large dams once in 10 years by independent review panels.

(d) Responsibility for maintenance and operation of dams lies with the dam owners. CWC plays only an advisory role for suggesting remedial measures to the problems, if specific request is received from the State Government/organizations in this regard.

Cess on ground water

1620. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether more than 1800 licenced bottled water units in the country pay a mere 30 paise per 1000 litres of water sourced from ground, as cess;

(b) whether in contrast to general industry sector that draws ground water for industrial purpose, the bottled water untis used ground water as its only raw material and sell it at more than 250 times the cost; and

(c) whether Government would consider imposing a higher rate of cess on ground water on bottled water untis, commensurating with their profit margin?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI JAY PRAKASH NARAYAN YADAV): (a) and (b) As per information received from the Ministry of Environment and Forests, water cess is levied and collected by the State Pollution Control Boards for prevention and control of water pollution. Differential rates of cess are collected depending upon the use of water, the rate being higher where pollution load is expected to be more, which results in higher cost of pollution abatement and varies from 2 paise per 1000 litres for domestic purposes to 30 paise per 1000 litres for industrial purposes.

(c) The Ministry of Water Resources has no proposal for imposing a higher rate of cess on ground water on bottled water units, commensurating with their profit margin.

National Policy on Flood Control

1621. SHRI M.V. MYSURA REDDY: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has formulated any National Policy on Flood Control in the country;